

To John Bruce

16 Dec 39

My dear Sir

I am much obliged by
your note informing me of W
Halliwell's project.

That project is a good one,
though, I own, it interferes with a
scheme of mine, to a certain extent.

Mr Wright knows that
months ago I mentioned to him
my desire to edit a series of
Seaside Plays. I did not mean
to take the MS called the Luden,
Coventria, or any other entire, but

to treat the subject as a science,
so as to shew in a single volume
the origin progress and perfection
(as far as the term may be deserved)
of that species of dramatic composi-
tion called a Miracle Play. I would
begin with the earliest & simplest,
and so gradually come down to the
latest & most complicated, until
I shewed how, & at what period
this kind of dramatic representa-
tion merged itself & was lost in
another species.

So far of Miracle Plays.
Then another part of my project
was in a subsequent year to
propose to the Council of the Camden
Society to follow up the *first vol.*
by a second, treating *Moral Plays*
by a second, treating *Moralities*, in

the same manner as I had treated Miracle Plays, and then establishing & pointing out from first to last the advance of our national drama, until it became what it was in the hands of our poets of the reign of Elizabeth.

I know that no bookseller would back me in such an undertaking - yet it would be highly important in the history of our literature; & it is part of the business & duty of the Camden Society to print works in themselves valuable, but which would not answer the purpose of a publisher as a pecuniary speculation.

Mr Halliwell's proposal is a good one, but I am bound to

say that I think mine a better.
I doubt too W Halliwell's know-
ledge of the matter at present,
though his zeal & industry seem
to be such that he would very likely
soon outstrip me.

I did not like to propose
anything on the subject to the
Committee - first - because I had a
work in hand for the Society, & next
because W Todd of Dublin has
a Miracle Play in progress & feared
our subscribers might think us
meant to be too dramatic. Again
thanking you, I am

My dear Sir

Yours very sincerely

J. Pagnel Collier

24 Brompton Sq.

Oct. 16th 1839.